

## New Guide Reveals What Firms Really Want in Lateral Hires



Thinking about a lateral move? Learn the 8 factors law firms prioritize in 2025—transferable skills, culture fit, business potential, reputation, stability, practice fit, and portable book.

### The Top Factors Firms Prioritize

#### 1) Immediate, Transferable Skills

Firms hire to meet active client demand. Attorneys who can step in and bill quickly—because their matters, industry exposure, and responsibility level mirror the hiring firm’s workload—rise to the top. Representative matters, deal/case complexity, and hands-on ownership on your résumé are scrutinized. [LawCrossing](#)

#### 2) Culture Fit & Soft Skills

Beyond technical ability, firms prioritize collaborators with strong communication, emotional intelligence, adaptability, and client-facing presence. These traits often decide the offer.

#### 3) A Credible Reason for Leaving

Your “why now” matters. Strategic motives—practice alignment, geography, platform, or advancement—signal maturity and long-term potential; vague or grievance-driven narratives raise red flags. [LawCrossing](#)

#### 4) Business Potential (Even for Associates)

Firms look for future rainmakers. Early signs—industry involvement, client exposure, networking, and entrepreneurial mindset—separate candidates who simply bill hours from those who will grow revenue. [LawCrossing](#)

#### 5) Clean, Consistent Reputation

Hiring partners quietly check references across the legal community and scan your online footprint. Reliability, professionalism, and ethics must align with the firm’s brand. [LawCrossing](#)

#### 6) Stability & Commitment

Patterns of short stints without a coherent story suggest risk. Firms invest heavily in onboarding and want evidence you’ll stay and grow. [LawCrossing](#)

#### 7) Practice Area Alignment

Even excellent lawyers are passed over if their practice doesn’t match the firm’s client mix or growth strategy. Fit with current demand is decisive. [LawCrossing](#)

#### 8) Portable Book of Business (Partners/Senior Counsel)

For senior moves, the portable book remains the single biggest factor—impacting both offer likelihood and terms—unless a hire uniquely fills an acute strategic gap. [LawCrossing](#)

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### Quick Candidate Checklist

- Do my recent matters mirror the hiring firm’s active work? (Show specifics on your résumé.) [LawCrossing](#)
- Can I articulate a positive, strategic reason for moving—tied to practice, platform, or geography?
- Do my references, online presence, and reputation reinforce professionalism and teamwork?
- For partners: Is my book portable, and how will it integrate with the firm’s client base?

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### Why This Matters Now

The lateral market remains competitive, and firms are increasingly selective. Understanding how partners evaluate risk, revenue potential, and cultural impact will help you tailor your résumé, refine your interview narrative, and target firms where you’re a natural fit. [LawCrossing](#)

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### Read the Source

For a deeper dive—including resume signals, interview focus areas, and common red flags—read the full LawCrossing guide: “***What Law Firms Are Really Looking for When Hiring Lateral Attorneys.***”

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